

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 QUITO 00570 272149Z  
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 TRSE-00 AID-05 IO-13 IGA-02 OMB-01 ACDA-12  
/094 W

-----064145 272154Z /75

P R 272054Z JAN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7106  
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
AMEMBASSY LIMA  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 0570

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, EC  
SUBJECT: BREAKUP OF NATIONAL CONSTITUTIONAL FRONT (NCF)

REF: QUITO 0330

1. LIBERAL PARTY DIRECTOR FRANCISCO HUERTA TOLD  
POLOFF JANUARY 26 IN GUAYAQUIL THAT THE COALITION OF  
LIBERALS, CONSERVATIVES AND NINE OTHER PARTIES CALLED  
THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTIONALIST FRONT (NCF) HAS BROKEN  
UP BECAUSE OF DISAGREEMENTS OVER THE FRONT'S PRESIDENTIAL  
CANDIDATE. HUERTA SAID THAT NCF SPOKESMEN WILL  
ANNOUNCE JANUARY 30 THAT THE FRONT IS DISBANDING  
BECAUSE THE MEMBERS WERE UNABLE TO AGREE ON A POLITICAL  
PROGRAM.

2. HUERTA SAID THAT HE AND THE LIBERALS (BELIEVING  
THEMSELVES TO BE THE SECOND STRONGEST PARTY AFTER  
ASSAD BUCARAM'S CFP) COULD NOT ACCEPT THE SECOND  
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SPOT HEADED BY THE "RIGHTIST" SIXTO DURRAN-BALLEN,  
EVEN IF THE DURAN-HUERTA TICKET WERE (AS THEY  
BELIEVE) ELECTORALLY UNBEATABLE. SUCH AN ALLIANCE,  
SAID HUERTA, WOULD LEAVE HIM IN OFFICE WITHOUT A  
PARTY BASE. THE LIBERAL RANK AND FILE COULD NOT  
SUPPORT A GOVERNMENT HEADED BY SIXTO DURRAN-BALLEN  
FOR IDEOLOGICAL REASONS, AND MANY WOULD DEFECT TO

BUCARAM, SERIOUSLY WEAKENING THE PARTY.

3. SINCE DURAN-BALLEN REFUSED TO CONSIDER THE SECOND SPOT, THE LIBERALS ARE PULLING OUT WITH THEIR ALLIES (THE SOCIALISTS AND ONE MINOR GROUP) AND WILL NOMINATE FRANCISCO HUERTA AS THEIR CANDIDATE. HUERTA MET IN QUITO ON JANUARY 24 WITH THE JAILED MEMBERS OF THE POPULAR COALITION (HURTADO OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND TRUJILLO OF THE PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVES) TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE ALLIANCES. IF SUCH AN ALLIANCE IS CONSUMATED, SAID HUERTA, THE VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE COULD COME FROM THAT GROUP.

4. HUERTA CLAIMS THAT HIS ANALYSIS OF VOTING TRENDS INDICATES THAT HIS TICKET HAS AN EXCELLENT CHANCE OF RUNNING SECOND TO BUCARAM. A COALITION WITH HURTADO AND TRUJILLO WOULD ALLOW HIS SLATE TO BE IDEOLOGICALLY CONSISTENT AND UNITE MOST OF THE CENTER-LEFT. IF HE RUNS THIRD, HE WILL SUPPORT DURAN-BALLEN IN THE RUNOFF, THOUGH MANY LIBERALS WILL DEFECT TO BUCARAM.

5. HUERTA ALSO BELIEVES THAT THE FAILURE OF THE NCF, WHICH WAS THE BEST HOPE OF DEFEATING BUCARAM AT THE POLLS, NOW MAKES PROBABLE A MOVE BY THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT TO SOMEHOW BLOCK BUCARAM'S CANDIDACY. IN THAT CASE, HUERTA WOULD EXPECT THE CFP TO SUPPORT THE

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LIBERALS OVER DURAN-BALLEN, THUS GUARANTEEING THE EVENTUAL SUCCESS OF THE LIBERAL PARTY TICKET.

6. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY SHARES AT LEAST A PORTION OF HUERTA'S ANALYSIS. WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF A STRONG DURAN-BALLEN/HUERTA TICKET, THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT HAD GREAT INCENTIVE TO ALLOW THE ELECTORAL PROCESS TO RUN ITS COURSE WITHOUT MOVING AGAINST BUCARAM. THE CONTINUING DISPLAYS OF THE PARTIES' INABILITY SUCCESSFULLY TO UNITE BEHIND A COMPROMISE TICKET MAKES MORE LIKELY A MOVE BY THE GOE TO FORMALLY DISQUALIFY BUCARAM PRIOR TO THE JULY 16 ELECTIONS.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** BREAKUP OF NATIONAL CONSTITUTIONAL FRONT (NCF)  
**TAGS:** PINT, EC, NCF, NATIONAL CONSTITUTIONAL FRONT  
**To:** STATE  
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